

# ***FROM HELL***

***A BACKGROUND FOR 5E D&D***

STEPH BOWEN

***"The fact that there's a Highway to Hell, but only a Stairway to Heaven says a lot about anticipated traffic numbers."***

***- Anonymous***



# CREDITS

**Writer and Game Designer:** [Steph Bowen](#)

**Template:** [Simple Microsoft Word Template](#) by Laura Hirsbrunner

**Cover Illustrator:** Jim Pavelec

**References:** “Manual of the Planes” by Jeff Grubb, Bruce R. Cordell, and David Noonan

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**Extra Special Thanks:** To my DM [Cobalt Blue](#), [Cinderblocksally](#) and Matt Thorn for their constructive criticism.

This background is also available for download at [DNDBeyond](#).



## ON THE COVER

This awesome illustration is available in the Dungeon Master’s Creator Resource Pack, labeled “WotC-FR\_PlayersGuideToFaerun\_highwayto.jpg” I believe it was done by Jim Pavelec in “The Player’s Guide to Faerun”.

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# FROM HELL

*"The fact that there's a Highway to Hell, but only a Stairway to Heaven says a lot about anticipated traffic numbers."*

—Anonymous

## FROM HELL

You've been through Hell, literally. You clawed your way from the Nine Hells of Baator, and through the fire-scarred plain of Avernus, you wandered while devils and demons waged eternal war along the rubble-cluttered banks of the River Styx. The desolate red plain offered no succor as you dodged errant fireballs streaking across a sulfurous wine-dark sky. You escaped a pit of malice made flesh.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Choose two of Acrobatics, Deception, Perception, Religion, or Survival

**Tools:** Choose one type of gaming set of your choice

**Languages:** Infernal, Abyssal

**Equipment:** A quarterstaff, any one gaming set you are proficient with, one trinket of special significance (choose one or roll on the Hellish Trinkets table), a set of traveler's clothes, and a pouch containing 15gp

## HELLISH TRINKETS

Choose a trinket or roll one on the Hellish Trinket table.

### HELLISH TRINKETS TABLE

#### d6 Hellish Trinket

- 1 A locket containing a woman's portrait
- 2 A piece of polished black hoof
- 3 A vial of viscous red water from the River Styx that produces a "glurp, glurp" when shaken
- 4 A tiny horned skull that glows an eldritch green
- 5 A piece of fractured dragon scale from Tiamat's last consort
- 6 A dirty white feather torn from the wing of Asmodeus as he fell to the Nine Hells

## FEATURE: HIGHLY SENSITIVE ASH-HOLE DETECTOR

You know precisely what evil lurks in a fiend's heart, among other organs. As an action, you can open your awareness to magically detect fiends. Until the end of your next turn, you know the location of any fiend within 30 feet of you that isn't behind total cover, and that isn't protected from divination magic. This sense doesn't tell you anything about a creature's capabilities or identity. This ability resets on a long rest.

## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

You may be a tiefling, the offspring between a human and devil. You have inherited an infernal lineage and a chip on your shoulder. Your parent may not even know of your existence. Or you may have gotten lost along the Road of Good Intentions and found yourself in Avernus. Perhaps you were dragged to hell as part of a fiendish bargain for your soul. However you arrived, you have survived up to this point partially by your wits, partially by luck, but mainly through a spiteful determination to persevere.

### d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I always note the most flammable objects in the room, even people. Especially people.
- 2 When I reach Mount Celestia, I'm going to find whoever's in charge, and slap them in the face!
- 3 I've made a list of people who've wronged me, and I recite their names every night before I sleep.
- 4 I like to jingle a set of bone dice or thumb through playing cards when thinking.
- 5 If I feel strongly about an issue, I won't back down, even if you stand me up at the Gates of Hell.
- 6 Mount Celestia doesn't want me, and Baator is afraid I'll take over!
- 7 I like to talk and joke about my past traumas casually and at great length. Why are you making that face?
- 8 When I need something from someone, I say they seem too bright for flattery ever to influence them. Works every time.

### d6 Bond

- 1 I made enemies during my time in Avernus and must ensure they never find me.
- 2 I swindled money from a dying man. I'm determined to find his loved ones and return it.
- 3 I have a parent who does not know I exist. Unfortunately for them, they're about to find out.
- 4 Anyone who stands in my way will burn.
- 5 I am enraged by the hardships and oppression of the world in general, and I intend to confront Mount Celestia about it!
- 6 I never play devil's advocate. Evil has enough public support.

#### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Authenticity.** I know who I am and what I stand for, and I'm not afraid to show it. (Any)
- 2 **Freedom.** Freedom from oppression on the Material Plane and elsewhere. (Good)
- 3 **Humor.** I find humor in the bleakest of situations. No one can squelch my "Asmodeus may care!" attitude. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Peace.** I'm tired of fighting. I long for a life of quiet solitude. (Lawful)
- 5 **Power.** Absolute power does not corrupt, it reveals. It reveals who you truly are. And I will never be powerless again. (Any)
- 6 **Revenge.** I will someday get revenge on the people who wronged me. (Evil)

#### d6 Flaw

- 1 I am slow to trust and expect the worst of people.
- 2 I am obsessed with my goal of revenge.
- 3 I like to gamble and accrue debts I know I cannot pay.
- 4 Sometimes I'm told that I'm "too clever for my own good" whatever that means.
- 5 I like to play both sides of a conflict and often get burned.
- 6 I cannot let my guard down and constantly look for new threats. You never know what's lurking behind that rock. Or the next rock. Or the next.

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You have been through Hell, literally. The fire-scarred plain of Avernus, specifically...

This custom background for D&D 5E contains skills, gear, 4 rollable tables to determine your suggested characteristics, and a bonus Hellish Trinkets Table.

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